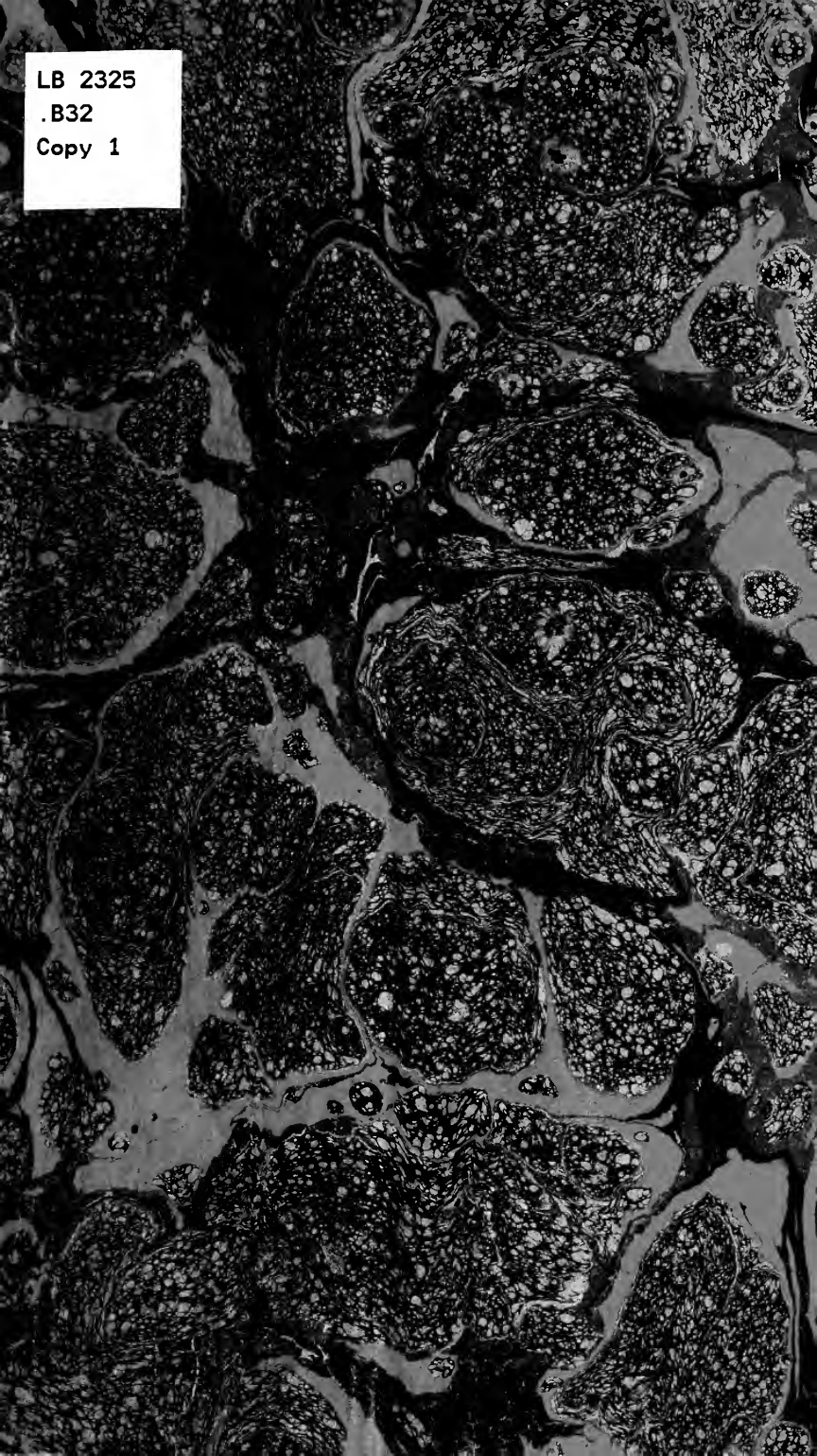


LB 2325

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Copy 1



Hon. Samuel H. Smith
from his friends
George Cleveland

Mr. James H. Smith

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the above named matter.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

Wm. H. Smith

LB 2325
B32

INAUGURAL ORATION, &c.

"EDUCATION forms the mind." The great philosopher of human intellect, by a thorough analysis of the understanding, and a complete investigation of its properties, has successfully refuted the ancient doctrine of "innate ideas," and thus justified the inference, that the contemporaneous doctrine of "intuitive knowledge" is unsupported by sound philosophy.—In the uncultivated mind intellectual powers do indeed exist; but, like the unpolished diamond, they exist in obscurity. Education brings them to light, displays their brilliancy, unfolds their beauty, and exhibits their real value; it excites their latent energies and controls their operations; it gives them activity, and applies them to the purposes, for which they were designed, and to which they are adapted, by Infinite Wisdom. We can, indeed, discern nothing in the human mind, distinct from the effects of education, but a capacity to receive instruction—a faculty to learn—a power to acquire and retain knowledge. Of this capacity, it is admitted, that there are various degrees be-

tween those extremes, which are denominated genius and stupidity. These extremes, however, are rarely found in nature. In most cases, ordinary minds, under the fostering hand of education, united with persevering industry, may rise to excellence and obtain the rewards of genius ; or by neglect and sloth, may sink to the lowest depths of stupidity, and remain the mere receptacles of folly. Buffon has said, "genius is nothing but patience." If this position is not true, in its full extent—if the attention and patience of an age would invent nothing, without a peculiar disposition of the organs of sense and a native acuteness of the powers of perception ; yet it is certain, that the acquisitions of genius always suppose vigorous application and patient investigation. With a very few exceptions, the distinctions among men, in knowledge, in strength of understanding, and even in brilliancy of imagination depend more on variety in education, than on original difference in capacity. And even the difference, which does exist, is often exaggerated. "If, as Seneca says, there is no great genius without some mixture of folly, perhaps also there is no great folly without some mixture of genius."

Hence we perceive the high importance of a good education for all the purposes of life. And the consideration of this subject, will not be thought unappropriate ; nor, I hope, be found uninteresting on the present occasion.—It is not my intention,

however, to discuss the subject in its largest extent, nor take a comprehensive view of all its branches and relations. Moral culture and religious instruction constitute a part, and unquestionably the most important part of education. Indeed, without these, the cultivation of the intellectual powers would be useless, and often worse than useless. Unsanctified learning, so far from adding to the happiness or usefulness of a man, serves only to increase his capacity for suffering, and extend his pernicious and corrupting influence in society.—To prescribe rules for the religious education of children ; and, by an exhibition of the most commanding motives, to urge on parents and guardians the duty of “bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,” would be a pleasant employment. But these topics fall not within the appropriate limits of this dissertation. I shall treat of them, therefore, no farther, than they are connected with literature and science ; and view them only, as they belong to a course of academick instruction.

A common education is of the first importance ; and it is all, that is necessary for the ordinary purposes of life. It is abundantly sufficient for those, who cultivate the soil ; for those, who devote themselves to the mechanick arts ; for those, who conduct the commercial concerns of society. These occupations, though among the most honourable and useful employments, allow but little time for study and mental cultivation ; nor do they require an

extensive acquaintance with the sciences. A knowledge of the rudiments of learning, such as may be acquired in almost every village in New-England, is all that is necessary (may I not add)—all that is beneficial in these departments of social life. A more refined education and a highly cultivated taste, by dividing the attention, might even unfit a man for excellence and energy in these pursuits. But without that degree of instruction, by which a person is enabled to read with facility, write with propriety, and compute with accuracy; no one is prepared to act well his part in any station in society, or pursue any employment with satisfaction to himself and usefulness to others.

It should never be forgotten, therefore, by the guardians of society and the friends of humanity, that common schools, to which the children of the poor as well as of the rich may have free access, are of the first importance to a community; imperiously demanding their attention and patronage. Especially, in a country like ours, and under forms of government like ours, neither public virtue nor civil liberty can be maintained, without a general diffusion of knowledge, and a liberal provision for the support of schools.

But, although a common school education is amply sufficient, and even best adapted to qualify youth for the common purposes and ordinary employments of life; there are functions to be performed in civilized society, which require a more

liberal education ; which cannot indeed be well performed without extensive knowledge and enlarged views of men and things—without an acquaintance with general literature and the great circle of human science. For what are usually denominated the learned professions, a partial and limited education is certainly inadequate. As Cicero well observes, “*Omnes artes, quæ ad humanitatem pertinent, habent quoddam commune vinculum, et quasi cognatione quadam inter se continentur.*” It is indeed a truth, established by literary experience, that no branch of liberal education can be successfully pursued independently of others, nor any neglected without injury to the whole.—Can a man be well versed in legal science, civil polity, and jurisprudence ; unless he is likewise acquainted with natural philosophy, logical induction and metaphysical reasoning ? And can he, without this knowledge, execute the functions of the several departments of well organized government, with understanding, consistency and despatch ? It is true, natural talents, acute discernment, and much experience and careful observation may, in a great measure, supply the deficiency of early education ; but they can never become a complete substitute. Without the fostering care of liberal education, we should look in vain for another Puffendorf or Blackstone or Sully or Burke or Ames.

Those men, who by native energy of mind and unwearied assiduity have overcome the disadvantages of defective instruction, raised themselves to offices of trust, and devoted themselves to the publick good, surely deserve well of their country, and merit peculiar praise. But how much higher would the same men have risen, and how much farther would their benign influence have been extended, if the superstructure of their knowledge had been erected on a broader foundation—if in youth they had received a literary and scientifick education—if their noble minds had been disciplined by study, and directed by instruction—if they had walked the Lycæum, had inhaled the pure air of Parnassus, and tracing the streams of literature and science to their fountain, had imbibed its unpolluted waters !

The same inquiries might be made ; and we should be led to the same result concerning those, who practise “ the healing art.” The profession of physick requires men of cultivated minds and studious habits. Medical science itself opens an extensive field for cultivation and research. It is, moreover, intimately connected with many other branches of general knowledge ; some of which are indispensable to it, and all highly auxiliary. Botany, chemistry and anatomy are its handmaids. The pages of Linnæus and his successors, of Lavoisier and his followers, of Bell and his coadjutors must be familiar to every physician, who looks

for distinction in his profession. It cannot, indeed, be denied, that some, whose early education was deficient, have made respectable attainments in these branches of knowledge, become men of extensive erudition, and by long and successful practice risen to eminence. But the same remark, which was made with reference to legal science, occurs here with equal force. If they have accomplished so much, under such disadvantages, what would they not have done, with the aid of a finished education ! They would have been Boerhaaves and Cullens and Harveys and Rushes and Warrens !—Beside, in estimating the value of general science and systematical education to the profession of physick, we must not forget the awful consequences of ignorance and presumption. While some men of native discernment, acute discrimination, and persevering research, have become skillful physicians, and even risen to eminence and distinguished usefulness, with few advantages ; how many have only increased the virulence of disease and the anguish of death ! How much mischief has been done by the nostrums and specificks of imposture and the boasted panacea of empiricism ! How many hecatombs, not of bulls and goats, but of human beings have been sacrificed on the altar of Æsculapius !

For the other learned profession, a classical and scientific education is surely not less important, than for those which have been named. If a civil-

ian, in order to become acquainted with the principles of jurisprudence and civil polity, must be a man of general knowledge—if a physician, to be well qualified for practising “the healing art,” must be a man of erudition; then surely those, who undertake “the cure of souls,” should not be *novices*. They should be thoroughly versed in the science of theology; and of course their youthful minds should be well stored with the knowledge of ancient customs and languages—with that literature and those sciences, which will aid them in illustrating, vindicating and enforcing the principles of the gospel. They should stand on *classick*, before they step on *holy* ground. They should drink largely at the Castalian fount, before they undertake to conduct thirsty souls to the fountain of living waters.

It is not contended, that learning is the first, much less the sole qualification, requisite for a preacher of the gospel. Christian principle—an experimental knowledge of the doctrines and duties of Christianity is unquestionably of the first importance for the sacred office. Indeed, this qualification is not only primary, but indispensable. Destitute of it a man, however learned and however eloquent, cannot preach *the gospel*—cannot speak *the truth in love*—cannot “allure to brighter worlds and lead the way.” On the contrary his ministry will serve only to confirm the unbelieving in their infidelity, and harden the impenitent in their sins; it will ren-

der him only “a savour of death unto death to them that perish.” The tempter, in the form of an angel of light—an enemy to truth and holiness, in the garb of a messenger of salvation, may lead thousands astray ; and “if it were possible, would deceive the very elect.”

“ I venerate the man, whose heart is warm,
Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose life
Coincident, exhibit lucid proof,
That he is honest in the sacred cause.”

Thus important—thus essential is christian principle to a minister of the gospel. It must not be forgotten, however, that every christian is not prepared to become a teacher of Christianity. All, who are “born of God,” are not “called of God” to the work of the ministry. An inspired apostle has decided, that *a bishop*, or christian minister, must be *apt to teach—able to convince gainsayers*. This qualification, always important, is peculiarly requisite at the present period and in the existing state of the church and the world. Since miracles have ceased—since too unsanctified learning has been employed with the most consummate art and indefatigable industry, to fortify the strong holds of infidelity and wickedness, it has become peculiarly important, that those, who are “set for the defence of the gospel,” should be men of cultivated minds and extensive erudition.

I do not affirm, that a public or collegial education is necessarily connected with this qualification. A man may have passed through all the forms of

academical instruction, and still remain illiterate—"a graduated dunce." There have been men too, who have derived from private tuition and personal application the principal advantages of a liberal education. The able and successful labours of Winter and Newton and Jay, and many in our own country, whom propriety forbids me to name, furnish conclusive evidence, that industry and talents may, in a good degree, supply the place of publick education, and render a man sufficiently learned for extensive usefulness in the ministry—"a scribe well instructed unto the kingdom of heaven."

These, however, are exceptions to a general rule. Ordinarily men will not--nay, cannot acquire, extensively and in well digested order, that kind of knowledge, which is highly important to a minister of the gospel, without the discipline and instruction of a liberal education.

It is admitted, that some illiterate men, of native energy of mind, actuated by motives of piety and benevolence, have undertaken to preach the gospel; and in places, destitute of more able teachers, they may have been instrumental of much good. But how much more extensive and permanent would their good influence have been, if they had been better qualified--if they had been able to answer the objections of learned infidels, and detect and expose the errors of subtle hereticks! With the same advantages of education, they might have

stood on equal ground with Doddridge and Scott and Edwards and Dwight—might have extended the sphere of their usefulness beyond the narrow compass of the human voice and the short period of human life—might have imparted instruction to people of different nations and successive generations—might have proved a blessing to thousands yet unborn!—Beside, how much has the cause of pure religion suffered; and how many have been led to despise the gospel, through the unballowed influence of ignorant fanaticks and false pretenders to inspiration!—

“From such apostles, O ye men of God,
Preserve the church; and lay not careless hands
On skulls, that cannot teach, and will not learn.”

The beneficial effects of liberal education and literary institutions, however, are not confined to these learned professions. They are seen and felt in all the ranks of civilized society.—Colleges furnish instructors for academies and common schools; and thus their benign influence, in some cases immediately and in others more remotely, reaches every man; and diffuses general knowledge through the whole community. They resemble the majestic and fertilizing Nile; which, rising from a single source, pursues its winding way through distant regions; and which stops not in all its course, nor by its many mouths falls into the sea; till it has watered and enriched all the plains of Egypt.

The hand, which should destroy these nurseries of science, would at the same stroke demolish the

beautiful fabrick of society, and reduce mankind to their primitive state of ignorance and barbarism. The cottage and the palace would feel the shock alike ; and the intellectual world again become a chaos. The deluge of Deucalion would not be wanted, to sweep away the works of art ; nor the fire of Omar, to consume the literature of ages.

Liberal education and literary institutions drew forth from the cloister the light of life, which had been concealed for more than ten centuries ; and gave liberty of conscience to the Christian world. The principal actor in the glorious reformation of the sixteenth century was a professor in the university at Wurtemburgh : When Europe had long groaned beneath the chains of Papal superstition, and yielded implicit obedience to its despotick mandate ; “*Submit yourselves to authority without examination ;*” Luther opened the treasures of literature, burst the leading strings of science, and rising with the energy of truth and the power of divine grace, established forever the right of free inquiry, and vindicated this noble principle and liberal prescription of Protestantism ; “*Examine, and submit yourselves only to conviction.*” From that period learning and religion became mutual coadjutors ; and though sometimes unnaturally divided, they have generally maintained an intimate alliance, and united their influence to civilize the world and bless mankind. As learning had lent

her aid, to break the chains, in which religion herself was bound ; so religion in turn gave new energy and lustre to learning. Ancient literature awoke from her slumbers. Science pushed her researches. Copernicus rose with Luther, and followed the track of the heavenly bodies. Newton succeeded them, and investigated the laws of nature. And Locke, pursuing in the train, analyzed the human mind.

It may seem superfluous to proceed farther in commending and vindicating the cause of literature and literary institutions—of science and liberal education. Objections, however, have been made and should be answered.—As an objection to the scientific part of a liberal education, it has been said, that natural philosophy, mathematical science, and metaphysical research have sometimes produced a spirit of skepticism, and lent their support to the cause of infidelity. The fact, on which this objection is founded, must indeed be admitted ; but the answer to the objection itself is short and conclusive. It was not *sound* philosophy—it was not *deep* investigation, which landed the self-named philosophers of the last century on infidel ground. The infidelity of that period may be traced with more propriety to superficial research, unrestrained love of theory, and an unbounded spirit of innovation. “A little philosophy,” says a philosopher himself, “inclineth men to atheism ; but depth in philosophy bringeth their

minds back to religion." He, who with Newton looks through nature, "looks up to nature's God." While he views, with philosophick eye, the beauty, proportion and harmonious operations of the complex machine of the visible universe; he beholds, with an eye of faith, the Hand, which made and moves the whole—he sees Divinity impressed on all the works of creation, and perceives the skill of Omniscience and the energy of Omnipotence in all its laws—he approves and justifies the decision of the pious bard; "An undevout astronomer is mad"—he even feels the spirit and adopts the language of the inspired psalmist; "O Lord, how manifold are thy works? in wisdom hast thou made them all!"

A more plausible objection, however, may be made to another portion of the usual course of liberal education—to the study of the ancient classics and polite literature. The writers of these classicks were heathens; and through the medium of their works, the whole machinery of their mythology is exhibited to the inexperienced and ardent mind of the youthful student. Gods and goddesses, not the work of men's hands, but the more fascinating work of human imagination, are presented to his view, adorned with all the drapery, and embellished with all the dazzling colours, which poetry and rhetorick, could cast upon them. He may not, indeed, be in danger of regarding the nod of Jupiter and his sons, nor of bowing down

to Diana and her sisters ; but is there no danger, that he will be charmed into effeminacy by the songs of Circe, or plunged into dissipation amidst the orgies of Bacchus ?—is there no danger, that familiarity with scenes of superstition will produce in his mind contempt for the sublime mysteries and holy rites of religion ?—is there no danger, that he will learn to regard the instructions of Christianity and Paganism with equal indifference ?—is there no danger, that the doctrines of the only living and true God will lose, at least, a portion of their sanctifying influence on the heart of one, who is thus early conducted into the temple of idolatry ?—Beside, the very spirit of the classicks is directly opposed to the spirit of the gospel. The one is a spirit of peace, humility, meekness and love ; the other of war, pride, ambition and revenge. The classicks inculcate the doctrines of selfishness and retaliation ; the gospel teaches us to love our brethren, to forgive our enemies, and do good to all men. The examples and precepts of the former are the result of depravity and blinded reason ; those of the latter flow from sanctifying grace and heavenly wisdom. The study of these productions of Greece and Rome, therefore, as far as it has any influence on the temper and character of youth, must have a pernicious and corrupting influence—must restrain the power, and counteract the spirit of Christianity.—It is, indeed, much to be feared, that those, who commence these studies in childhood,

and pursue them unaccompanied with religious instruction—who read the fabulous stories of heathen gods, without a familiar acquaintance with the word of the God of truth, will become prejudiced against the doctrines, indifferent to the authority, and callous to the spirit of the gospel. “It would require” (to adopt with a slight variation the language of an admired writer)—“it would require a very affecting impression of christian truth, a very strongly marked idea of christian character, and a habit of thinking with sympathetick admiration of the most elevated class of christians, to preserve entire the evangelical spirit,” among the seducing examples, and exposed to the corrupting sentiments, which appear in such works as the *Iliad* of Homer and the *Æneid* of Virgil; adorned, as they are, with all the facinating charms of poetry.

Nor does the objection end with the productions of antiquity. Modern literature is not free from the charge of corrupting influence on the young mind. Among our most celebrated historians, we find a Hume, a Gibbon and a Voltaire; avowed infidels, embracing every opportunity to reproach the christian character and shake the foundations of christian hope. With the exception, too, of Milton and Watts and Cowper and Young and a few of minor importance, the influence of our English poets is not much more favourable to evangelical truth and holiness. Indeed, many of the finest writers of the last century, both in prose and verse,

if not avowed enemies to Christianity, were certainly not its friends. The highest ground, on which they ever stand, is that of strict neutrality; and too often they may be found even in the enemy's camp. It is surely to be lamented, that so many of the streams of modern literature have been poisoned at the fountain—that, while the cup of knowledge is gilded without, and the draught rendered sweet to the palate, it frequently contains a secret infusion of poison for the incautious youth, in whose hand it is placed.

The objection to classical studies and polite literature, arising from these considerations, is surely plausible and imposing. It is sufficient to excite a deep solicitude in the parental bosom; and it should be regarded, and as far as possible obviated, in forming the plans and conducting the business of liberal education. But shall it be suffered to prevail in its full extent? Shall it be permitted to exclude from our seminaries of learning the best models of taste and sublimity in composition, and close the most direct avenues to the temple of literature and science? Shall we, through fear of the possible evil of classical studies, voluntarily relinquish the benefits, which result from them? Shall we indulge the timid spirit of Laocoon; and with reference to the great body of literary productions, both ancient and modern, adopt his cautious maxim; “*timeo Danaos et dona ferentes?*” Shall the friends of religion and humanity retire from clas-

sick ground ; and leave the field of knowledge exclusively to “men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith ?” Shall the enemies of our holy religion be suffered to occupy all the fortresses of learning, and secure to themselves all the weapons of literature, by which we might effectually defend the citadel of our faith against their attacks ? In a word, shall our colleges be deserted by pious instructors and pious students, and left to the management and use of infidels ; and thus rendered exclusively nurseries of infidelity—the very hot-beds of licentiousness ?—Rather let every friend to the cause of truth and righteousness be induced, to guard with unceasing solicitude, and encourage by renewed patronage these literary institutions—institutions, which must and will exert a powerful influence on the principles, character and happiness of the great mass of society. Let him give them his efficient support, not only by his charities, but by his counsels and prayers. Let those especially, who are concerned in their government and instruction, unite their efforts, and exert their combined wisdom and energy, to correct the abuses of learning and purify the fountains of knowledge. Let them incorporate in the system of liberal education an explicit recognition of the truth and duties of Christianity. Let them see, that every authorized pursuit, within the walls of college, begins and ends with God. “Let the Bible, as in the early controversies of christians, be placed on an

elevated throne, and the most admired volumes of human production lie at its feet ;” let it be found at the head of every alcove in the library ; let it be the first book to be consulted in the morning, and the last to be read at night ; let it, especially, be the only classick for holy time.

With such precautions and under such regulations, a pious youth will surely be safe in college. Thus protected he will have no occasion to fear the baleful influence of ancient paganism or modern skepticism. Surrounded by these guards and armed with the panoply of heavenly grace, he may effectually resist the shafts and completely palsy the arm of infidel philosophy. Having a mind deeply imbued with religious sentiment, well furnished with religious knowledge and daily exercised in religious duties, he may read the classicks, ancient and modern, without injury to his principles or character—he may even discover in these works clear illustrations and striking proofs of the doctrines of the gospel ; and thus actually find his christian faith confirmed by them ;—

“Atque inter sylvas Academi quærere verum.”

Concerning those youth, who commence a course of liberal education, before they have furnished to their pious friends any evidence of religious principle and christian character, there is, indeed, much cause for anxiety. Happy, therefore, are those parents, who see their children established in the faith and walking in the truth, before they step on

classick ground. But this happiness is not the portion of all, who wish to give their sons a finished education: It must, of course, be a serious question, whether they shall deny them the privileges of collegiate instruction, or expose them to the dangers, which the usual course of liberal education necessarily involves?—I dare not attempt a definite solution of the difficult question. I will not say, that pious parents should send their children to a literary institution; while they are evidently destitute of religion; especially, if they are openly vicious and strongly inclined to dissipation. I should rather say, let none of this character be admitted within the walls of college. I would even stand at the gate of the temple of science, and proclaim the irrevocable prohibition,—

———“Procul, O procul, este profani!”

But in cases of habitual regularity, and freedom from immoral conduct, may not the anxious parent be encouraged to commit his darling son to God, under the guardian care and instruction of pious and faithful teachers? May he not indulge the hope, that his covenant God will regard the parental tear, and answer the parental prayer; and render the temple of science, to his beloved and devoted child, “the house of God”—“the gate of heaven?”—There can be no question, however, that it is the duty of parents, never to send their sons to college, without at least a speculative knowledge of Christianity and an habitual rever-

ence for its institutions. Ye anxious fathers ! ye tender mothers ! as you regard the happiness of your children, in time and eternity, let them not go from your domestick altar ; till the language of the sacred scriptures is rendered familiar to their minds, and a portion of their precious truths are inscribed upon their memories. Follow them, too, with your daily prayers, and frequent warnings and counsels. Above all, see that they are placed under the care of instructors of approved character and unquestionable piety ; and in a seminary evidently favoured of Heaven, and often visited with the effusions of the Holy Spirit.—It should never be forgotten, indeed, that a young man destitute of religion, in a college on which the dews of heavenly grace never descend, is placed in a situation of peculiar danger. He stands upon a precipice ; and all beneath is death ! With an unsanctified heart within him, and unsanctified books before him, and unsanctified companions about him, and unsanctified instructors over him, what is there to restrain him from error and vice—what is there to preserve him from the abyss of infidelity and licentiousness !

This objection, therefore, viewed in all its bearings, and traced to all its results, is full of instruction. It should on the one hand stimulate the pious to exertion, and on the other induce them to act with caution, in the momentous business of education. Where the evil can be corrected, every

prudent measure should be adopted for its correction ; and where the danger cannot be avoided, it should be met with fortitude, and overcome by resolution and perseverance.--The simple fact, that knowledge is sometimes perverted--that men of literature and science do sometimes devote their talents to the cause of error and wickedness--that learning is sometimes employed, as an engine of destruction against the best institutions of religion and society,--should rouse the friends of God and human happiness to activity, in the cause of truth and righteousness--should induce them to furnish their children, especially their pious sons, with the means of good education ; and thus provide for them, and through them for society, a sure defence against the attacks of infidelity and licentiousness. If the world must have its Bolingbrokes and Byrons and Condorcets ; let it have, too, its Newtons and Cowpers and Wilberforces. If the doctrines of the gospel must be attacked and perverted by such men, as Priestly and Belsham and Fellows and Yates ; let them be defended and illustrated, likewise, by men, like Horsley and Magee and Scott and Wardlaw. If men of corrupt minds will enter the temple of science, and kindle on its altars the unhallowed fire of infidelity and error ; let not those, who love the truth, be inactive spectators of their profanation--let them see, that the pure and holy flame, which came down from heaven, may never be extinguished.

Gentlemen of the Corporation of Middlebury College, it is a deep conviction of the truth of the positions, maintained in this discourse—it is an impressive view of the importance of learning and literary institutions to the church and the world—to our children and our country, which has brought me before you this day. Nothing, but the hope of becoming a humble instrument in promoting the cause of sound learning and pure religion, in this infant, but highly respectable Institution, could have induced me to leave a beloved church and people, with whom I had spent fifteen years in uninterrupted peace—to whom I was bound by a thousand tender ties ; by the most endearing considerations, by the most pleasing associations, by the most powerful sympathies ; by those cords of affection, which are entwined about the heart and moistened by the very current of life. But encouraged by the zeal and liberality, with which you and the numerous patrons of this Institution have raised it up, and given it support ; and by a view of the tokens of Divine approbation, which have attended your labours, I have been constrained to accept your invitation, to take part in its government and instruction. I do, accordingly, this day solemnly devote myself to its interests. And though I feel diffident of my qualifications for the discharge of the momentous duties of the office, to which I am called ; yet united with experienced and approved instructors,

assured of the candour and support of able counsellors, followed by the prayers of christian friends, and relying on the strength of Divine grace, I enter upon these duties with cheerfulness and hope.

Gentlemen, the cause, in which we are engaged, is worthy of zeal and perseverance ; and the circumstances, under which we act, are full of encouragement. The Institution has already acquired a reputation, and obtained a rank among the most favoured seminaries of our country. It has risen with a rapidity of growth almost unparalleled in the annals of literature. It has gained the confidence of the religious publick. It has attracted the attention, and secured an interest in the prayers of christians. Let it not fall through our neglect. Let it not be said, that its "glory is departed." By the wisdom of its counsels and the fidelity of its instructions, let it still deserve the patronage of the pious and liberal—of the friends of literature and religion.—May it still enjoy the smiles of Heaven ! May the sphere of its usefulness be still enlarged ! May it extend through this Commonwealth, and far beyond its limits, an influence, pure as the air of our own mountains, and refreshing as the streams which descend from their lofty summits !

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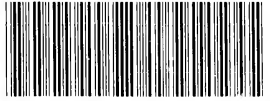








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